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TO THE
AUTHOR
OF A
LIBEL,

ENTITLED,
A LETTER to the EDITOR, &c.



LONDON:

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M DCC XLIX.

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF A

LIBRARY

UNITED

AMERICAN LIBRARY



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TO THE
AUTHOR of a LIBEL, &c.

WHETHER you are a wrangling *Wapping* Attorney, a pedantick Pretender to Criticism, an impudent paradoxical Priest, or an Animal yet stranger, an heterogeneous Medley of all three (as your farraginous Stile seems to confess) there are few, I believe, would trouble themselves to determine, had you confined your Insolence to your own stercorarious Rank. But when you proceed to such Extravagance of Presumption as to disclaim all Apology for the injurious Treatment
B you

you gave the greatest Man that this, or any other Nation perhaps, produced, who can either be silent, or speak with Temper?

Of all the Swarm of scribbling Insects that buz about the Town, whenever a bright Sun appears, it is your peculiar Misfortune not to be able to conceal yourself. Like those who have a fetid Breath, you are known in the dark. Your Stile, which (as I observed above) partakes the Genius of your tripple Character, betrays you. Consistently with the first Part of it, you seem, in your Libel, to be filing a litigious Bill against a great and good Man for resenting the Turpitude of a Person, whom he had honoured long with his Friendship and Confidence. Your impudent, tho' impotent Effort to
strain

strain an Inconsistency from the Advertisement prefixed to his Lordship's Book, together with your Ignorance of the Design and Application of an historical Anecdote in the Book itself, represents with great Propriety the Critick on *Shakespear*: whilst the canting, declamatory Apostrophe intimates not obscurely the third Part of your Character. In short, had you given your beloved *Paradox* a Place in the Title, as indeed it is the very Subject of your Libel, and called it *Mr. Pope's Innocence demonstrated*; few Readers, I believe, would hesitate to attribute it to you.

This Observation, as it is obvious, might have been omitted, were it not that another Consideration makes the Detection of the vile Tree by its

vile Fruit necessary. It may exhibit, in you, an Instance in Proof of the Consequence of admitting every low Wretch to the Dignity of Priesthood. A little classical Knowledge picked up in some paultry School dubs them Pedants. A few Scraps of History and Anecdotes of Antiquity, collected by the Help of Indexes, give them the Air of Criticks. To which the Bishop has no sooner added that Part of the Paraphernalia of a Gentleman, a Gown (which is all the temporal Decoration He can add) than they begin to deal Paradoxes most dogmatically and superciliously from the Pulpit, and presumptuous Scandal upon their Betters not infrequently from the Press.

Having said thus much in relation to the unworthy Person I am
writing

writing to, I think it proper to inform the Publick that I have not the Honour of a personal Acquaintance with the noble Author you abuse, nor with his ingenious Editor; as you boast that of an Intimacy with Mr. P—, to which that you crept by the vilest Adulation, or in the more Germane Phrase of one of your Brethren, by *licking his Feet*, there are many living Witnesses to prove. His Lordship's publick Character, as an Author and a Statesman, is known to all *Europe*: and, far from standing in need of any reflected Lustre from Rythmes, though Mr. P——'s, the finest, indeed, in our Language, will shine in native Splendor, even for those Works with which he has already obliged the World, and live in glorious Fame, whilst the *British* Constitution continues.

tinues. His private Character, for the universal Benevolence, and every manly Virtue, I have learned from some who know him as well, who esteem and honour him with more disinterested and sympathetick Hearts (I am sorry to say it) than Mr. P— did: from some whose Patronage was your greatest Honour, and who will be far surely from approving the Injury you have done their Friend. This Knowledge it was, together with that Indignation, which every honest Mind must feel at seeing Wisdom, Virtue, and Quality thus publicly insulted, that determined me to the low Office of chastising you. An Office too much beneath the Dignity of the noble Injured, from whom, most probably, you will receive nothing more than that silent Contempt,

tempt, in which He must hold Creatures of your Size and Stamp.

The Case of *L— B—* and Mr. *P—* with regard to the Fact in Question, (the Circumstances of which you have fraudulently concealed, if you did know them, or ignorantly misrepresented, if you did not) I will state in its true Light: after which I shall make some Animadversions on those Obligations, under which you impudently affirm that the latter by his Writings laid the former; and then leave you and your infamous Libel to the Judgment of the Publick.

The Fact then, as related by the most authentick Testimony, is this. *L— B—*, upon his going the last

last Time into *France*, left, besides the Works written for Mr. P——'s own Instruction (which gave him ample Reason to call the Author his *Guide, Philosopher, and Friend*) several original Manuscripts on different Subjects, and among the rest that of the Letters lately published, in his Hands, charging him at the same time to keep them inviolably secret from all the World except the few Persons then named to him. In this generous, and apparently just, Confidence of their Security, He left *England*. In a little time after, his Lordship, as the Advertisement says, had Reason to think that more Persons, than He directed, had seen them: but could not stretch his Suspicion so far, as an entire Edition of all the Letters he had left. The Suspicion he was made to entertain, he communicated

municated to Mr. *P*——; whose bare Denial of the Fact was sufficient to remove it from a Heart so disposed to confide in him as that of his noble Friend. He was often solicited by Mr. *P*—— to publish these Letters, which (let me observe by the way) had his Lordship consented to do, the Profit would have been Mr. *P*——'s, not his: for, stripped and plundered as he was, and great as he knew the publick Demand to be for any Work that bore his Name, he ever disdained to instruct Mankind for Hire. This Mr. *P*—— knew, and this all those concerned in the Publication of any of his Writings can testify. Thus we see that, whatever Motive Mr. *P*—— had to make the Request, his Lordship's Reason for refusing to grant it was most just. What his Lordship wrote was true,

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tho' perhaps too warm. The Man addressed to was a Friend, not improbably, near the great Person for whose Instruction these Letters were wrote, and who was yet but a Subject. The Prince described is excellent, yet within the Bounds of human Perfection; to which Malice most probably would not fail to make some invidious Contrasts. This was surely such a Reason, as would have made any Man actuated by Friendship alone, not only cease all further Importunity, but burn the Edition already printed.

Mr. P—— indeed altered his Request, and sent it in the Form of an Advice. He wrote to his Lordship in *France*, telling him that the Manuscript was impaired, and would be probably defaced in some time, as
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the Paper was but thin: as transcribing the whole therefore would be tedious and troublesome, as well as unsafe, he advised him to permit a Number of Copies, equal to that of the Persons admitted to see the Original, to be printed off: which, as he dealt with Printers, he promised to have effected with the utmost Secrecy and Exactness. To this his Lordship consented, and sent him, with the Alterations and Amendments of as many Passages as occurred to his Memory, Directions to print ten Copies.—Here I must inform the Publick of a Circumstance, which I had from some who were present at the Discovery of it; and which the World should never have known from me, had not your Insolence made it necessary for every Friend to Truth to discover all

they know of this Matter. The Circumstance is this: Mr. P—— printed the ten Copies directed, according to the Emendations he received, one of which he sent to his Lordship: but left them all out, and disposed the Subject according to his own Humour, in the 1500 he had secreted. For this Proceeding, now I believe, no Man beside yourself, will offer to account, which Mr. P—— must have made, without attributing it to a Presumption, that these very Passages which were most exceptionable, and which, together with the Desire of an uninterrupted Retirement, hindered the noble Author from publishing them, would have enhanced the Sale of them.

This now is the Truth of the Case. A Man driven, by a long Series of
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unparalleled ill Usage, from the World, yet remembering his Country and his Solitude, throws open his Heart to a Friend on the most delicate Subject. He deposits the Secret in the Hands of another still dearer Friend, if possible. The latter, contrary to the Dictates of Honour, Honesty, and Friendship, not only discloses it to more, and more remote Friends, than he had Permission to do, but disposes it so, as that the whole World should, upon the Demise of the Author, see his inmost Thoughts crude and uncorrected as they were. Must not every Man, less disingenuous than yourself, conclude now that Professions of Friendship, Honour, and Esteem, from a Man capable of such Perfidy, were only Aggravations of his Guilt? May it not be said too with Truth, that,

that, by preserving the Edition concealed, he repeated his Crime every time he saw, or wrote to the Author, from the Date of the Impression to that of his Death ?

To introduce the paradoxical Motive which you assign for Mr. *P*—'s Conduct, you abuse the Publick by an Anachronism, which I must here correct. All Men, I believe, you only excepted, who have heard of this Affair, have concluded at once that Mr. *P*— held this Conduct upon a Presumption of not only surviving his noble Friend, but of his Lordship's either bequeathing him all the Papers then in his Hands, if he should make a Will ; or of his dying intestate, by which he would be equally Master of them : for in that Case no one would dispute his
Title

Title to them, had he only said (as, no doubt, he would have said) that his Lordship had made him a Present of them in his Life time. In Contradiction to this obvious Truth you say, that Mr. P——, both from the Opinion of his Physicians and his own Consciousness of his State of Health, could not hope to survive his Lordship; by which you would insinuate, that he committed this Fact in the last Days of his Life. Vile Sophister! the Date of the Impression was some Years before that of his Death, and (as I have learned by the strictest Enquiry) about the time that L—— B—— was in so bad a State of Health, that the best Physicians of *France* despaired of him. Nay besides, for many Years before, Mr. P—— was conscious that his
 Lordship

Lordship was more than half his time unable to walk, or even to stand, as he, Mr. P— said in a Letter which I saw of his to Dr. S—.

Having now disabused the Publick by exposing your Sophism on this Point, I proceed to the Motive to which you attribute this base Action. It was not Avarice, you say, for Mr. P—— refused Pensions from the Ministers of more Denominations than one. What you mean by this I cannot say; for the Ministers who excited, promoted, and continued all the Violence done to L—— B—— were the same Persons, without much Change or Succession from the time of his Exile to that of Mr. P——'s Death. To the Administration of these Ministers, the wisest and most virtuous Part of the

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the Nation carried on a just Opposition. To be a Pensioner then to such Ministers, that is, to do the Service required for a Pension, would have been a Crime which he could not hope to conceal. It would have wounded his Vanity, which was more predominant, perhaps, than his Avarice, in that Period of Life: and therefore no Argument can be drawn from his refusing such Pensions, to prove that Avarice was not his Motive to the Action in Question, which never could have been detected, had he succeeded in it. Another Argument urged by you, and some others of your Fraternity, on this Head, if it means any thing, must affirm, as your Arguments generally do, a Paradox. It must affirm, that no avaricious Man would lay out a small Sum of Money in Expectation of a

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large

large Return, tho' after some time: the Repugnancy of which to common Experience is a sufficient Confutation of any Conclusion drawn from it. But not to insist on this Paradox; to advance the Argument at all is another Instance of that Effrontery with which you rush into a Debate without sufficient Information. Go to *Bath*, and enquire of a Bookseller there, who the Person was, that bore the greatest Part of the Expence of this villainous Edition? — But notwithstanding all this, Mr. P——'s Motive, say you, was not Avarice, but *an excessive and superstitious Zeal for L—B—'s Glory*. Shuffling Pedant! Are not you sensible, nay do not you tell the World, most inconsistently, in your Libel, that these Letters were not the Work, which was to dispel that Cloud
of

of Prejudices and Errors which Malice had spread to render his Lordship's Character problematical? That Work is of another Kind, and, if I am rightly informed, was never left in Mr. P——'s Hands, nor even finished at the time these Letters were entrusted to him. If these Letters then do not develope his Character, and by that Means promote his Glory, with what Face can you assign that Motive for the Conduct of Mr. P——? Was it a *Zeal* for the noble Author's *Glory* that prompted him to omit, in the secreted Edition, all his Emendations? But it would be only time mispent to dwell any longer on so plain a Case. I shall now therefore proceed to consider those pretended Obligations, by Virtue of which you insinuate (most paradoxically too) that Mr. P——

might act a perfidious Part towards his noble Friend, without Censure, but that this injured Friend could not, without Ingratitude, resent it.

If you were as intimate with Mr. *P*——, as you pretend, you must know the Truth of a Fact which several others, as well as I, who never had the Honour of a personal Acquaintance either with *L*—— *B*—— or Mr. *P*—— have heard. The Fact was related to me by a certain Senior Fellow of one of our Universities, (whom I need not name to you) who was very intimate with Mr. *P*——; the Manner in which he came to the Knowledge of it was this. He started some Objections, one Day, at Mr. *P*——'s House, to the Doctrine contained in the Ethick Epistles: upon which Mr. *P*——

told him, that he would soon convince him of the Truth of it, by laying the Argument at large before him; for which Purpose he gave him a large prose Manuscript to peruse, telling him at the same time the Author's Name. From this Perusal, whatever other Conviction the Doctor might receive, he collected at least this, that Mr. *P*—— had from his Friend not only the Doctrine, but even the finest and strongest Ornaments of his Ethicks. Now if this Fact be true, (as I question not but you know it to be so) I believe no Man of Candour will attribute such Merit to Mr. *P*——, as you would insinuate, for acknowledging the Wisdom and the Friendship of the Man who was his Instructor in Philosophy; nor, consequently, that this Acknowledgment, and the Dedication

tion of his own System, put into a poetical Dress by Mr. P——, laid his Lordship under the Necessity of never resenting any Injury done to him by the Poet afterwards. In this Respect then let the World judge on whose Side the Obligation lay, and whether Mr. P. told more than literal Truth, in calling L— B— his *Guide, Philosopher, and Friend.*—— But further. Rather than not enhance Mr.—— P——'s Friendship, in Contradiction to Fact and Reason both, you no longer confine your Abuse to one, but stretch it most insolently to a great number of noble and worthy Persons. You say, that in L— B—'s Distress every Friend, except Mr. P——, deserted him. Audacious Libeller! let the Scandal fall where it is deserved: but did any Man of Virtue, that was his Friend,

Friend, ever desert him ; or any Man of Parts, that did not at the same time desert the Cause of his Country ? Are not the choicest Spirits of *Great Britain*, for Virtue and Understanding, proud to be numbered among his Friends to this Day ?

To conclude. What Mr. P—— said of his noble Friend's private Character, he knew to be true ; for he knew him intimately. He knew, as several others do, that, far from being incapable of Friendship (which you, vile Slanderer ! assert) tho' the greatest Statesman in the World, his voluntary Exile was due to the most noble Principle. If he knew him, at a time of Life when human Passions are strong and inflammable, to have been proscribed, plundered, degraded, and persecuted with such
Violence,

Violence, as overturned his Reason, unhinged his Allegiance, and plunged him from the Arms of a national Party into those of a rebellious Faction; he knew him too upon the Return of his Reason, and on the Experience he had gained of the Incompatibility of the *British* Constitution and the Government of a Popish Pretender, to have abhorred himself for suffering human Passions, tho' never so justly provoked, to eclipse his Reason and commit this Outrage even for a small time on his Virtue. If he knew him, when called home by his late Majesty of ever-glorious Memory (whose much lamented Death hindered the Completion of his gracious Promise then, and which the vile Insinuations of one Man withheld afterwards) to have lived in the strictest

Loyalty

Loyalty to the illustrious House now on the Throne: If he knew him, since Envy, Calumny, and Self-interest had kept his Councils from his Sovereign, to endeavour privately and at a Distance to instruct at least some Friend near the Person of his Prince: If he knew him to have no Wish for himself beyond possessing his Soul in Peace, and sharing with his Friends a Retreat from the Vices of a futil and corrupt Age: If he knew this best of Men, sacrificed to the worst of Principles and of Men, shew no other Instance of Resentment for all the Wrongs he suffered, than that of withholding from an ungrateful People that Light, by which they might discover what a Treasure they had lost: If he knew all this, I say, to be true, as several others, who had the same

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Opportunity, know, and declare it;
I think there was no Supererogation
of Friendship in his saying,

*Posterity shall blush their Fathers
were thy Foes.*

I have now developed the Fact
you misrepresented; and from no
other Authority than that of an ho-
nest Indignation for your Insolence,
have given you that Chastisement
which you could not expect from the
noble Author you calumniate. His
ingenious Editor, probably, had not
that Badge of a Gentleman, which you
disgrace, protected you, might give
you the Correction due to a scurri-
lous Ruffian from a Gentleman: but
his Pen is too well employed to
write *your* Name. I will therefore
only observe further, with regard
to Mr. P——, that his Conduct
has

has given the World just Reason to
say, with the Poet, instead of *beatus*

———*dicique fidelis*
Ante obitum nemo supremaque fu-
nera debet.

And to you I may justly apply a
Thought of Mr. P—'s,

“ Who is most likely to do a per-
fidious Action? He who defends
“ it in another.

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